

THE CLASSIC VACUUM CLEANER PLOY

No matter what the cost, your boss says, get it out to the truck. Promise them, swear to them -- that you won't do a thing. Offer them a free service check or a gratis minor adjustment. Just get it out to the truck! So the fleet moves out like on

D-Day, and you invade the upper-middle class neighborhoods, unsuspecting housewives kicking back for that 2nd amphetamine A.M. with cup o' coffee. Or maybe sublimating that lonely drive by tuning in the vibrator to Family Feud. You swoop in like the Green Berets -- fanning out with military precision and you take them. Once you get the vacuum

cleaner out to the van, you have them. Even if it's brand new, you strip it down and maybe, just maybe, some slight flaw will allow you to bring her the parts in hand. Wide eyed, incredulous, you hold them out -- an offering -- Look, lady, this is bad, you say. This belt is gonna go any day -- lucky it got this far.

She examines all the parts, lacking the courage to say, put it all together and forget the belt. So you've got her. Your team covers several blocks with the same result. You eat lunch in the van, on the run. You sell a couple parts, can't reconcile yourself to a life of vacuous vacuums, so you fantasize trying the swimming pool cleaning business. Lolling

ladies in topless bikinis in backyards, Seagram's Seven in hand, shimmer in tin foil heat. You

collect \$15.50 for a day's work, go home to the Ocean View apt. on PCH, to your wife of two months. You scan the want ads -- Kirby Vacuum is hiring: Sales manager trainees, guaranteed monthly salary, no canvassing